

A Sky Full Of Stars

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Summary: "The first time they meet, he's twenty-four, and she literally falls from the sky. He thinks it's love at first sight. It's notâ€"it rarely ever isâ€"but close." AU.

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****Prologue****

* * *

><p>â€" summer â€"

It's half-time break when they tell him. It doesn't come from his teamâ€"Coach Jones would never risk upsetting him like thisâ€"but the Magpies got wind of the news too, and what better way to cripple Puddlemere United's winning streak than to effectively upset their top Chaser halfway into the game?

"The shack blew up," they tell him, almost sorry, but he knows better. James wonders if she screamed. If she had time to. "Spell gone wrong. They weren't able to save her."

He should cry, but he doesn't. He doesn't feel anything, really, which is alarming, but he can't even summon _that _emotion properly. With a wordless nod he shoulders his broom and walks away, the hallway suddenly such a long, long trip for him. He can hear the roar of the crowd from the pitch, the united chorus of "POTTER, POTTER, _POTTERâ€"!_"

His teammates know. In the changing rooms, James, hunched over on a bench and glaring at the floor, drains the contents of his water bottle, avoiding everyone's eyes. Still, in his periphery, he sees some of them look on with conspicuous concern. Do they know that he knows now? Can they tell? Sirius and the others are on the top box. Has anyone told them?

An official pokes his head into the room and says something. Everyone gets to their feet.

"Ready?" James asks everyone before takeoff. He's still captain, after all.

In response, they all look at each other. He almost laughs. Whatâ€”they're not even going to try?

"Let's go," he mutters, not bothering to wait for an answer.

He's forgotten what it feels like to fly without drowning in the hundred thousand voices chanting his name. He's probably never going to remember anymore.

The whistle blows, and it's the last game he plays.

End
file.